

## Reflection by OTTSTF

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**Summary:**

Fear. Confusion.

*Envy.*

*Happiness.*

These emotions are what Jane remembers from that week.

## Reflection

### Author's Note:

I don't even know what this is.

I had a sudden urge to rewatch.

I was going to binge straight through both seasons.

I stalled at 1x03, and started writing this.

Watched the snowball, then finished this.

I really don't know.

Fear. Confusion.

*Envy.*

*Happiness.*

These emotions are what Jane remembers from *that* week.

*Fear.*

Running from Papa. Trying to find Will. Dealing with the Demogorgon.

*Confusion.*

So many new words, new concepts. Friends. Promises. *Freedom.*

*Envy.*

Pictures of the lives her new friends have had. A life that she wasn't allowed to have. A life she was robbed of, and will never have.

*Happiness.*

Meeting the party. Meeting *Mike*. Being free of the torture that the lab put her through. The start of her new life, never to be used as a

piece of equipment, ever again.

That day. That oh so important day, where luck was on her side, and she'd crossed paths with Michael Wheeler. The first person to show her care and friendship without any questions. She did not speak, she did not answer his questions to begin with, yet he still took her to his home, hid her from her former captors, and swore to keep her safe forever.

Laying in her bed, she lets the urge win. She rises, to head straight to Mike, who's asleep on the sofa. This night was one of their sleepover nights – they, Hopper, and Karen Wheeler had agreed that they would allow the two to see each-other more often than not, which inevitably included sleepovers)

The parents were – of course – hesitant to allow sleepovers to begin with. With plenty of reassurance from Michael, and much to his shock, even Nancy, they'd eventually won them over. Hopper first, considering his knowledge of their deep-hearted connection, who'd then reassured Karen that all would be fine (they'd already shared a bed together, courtesy of Jane's demands following the whole *interdimensional gate* fiasco – she refused to sleep alone that night).

But, they had agreed, much to the parent's relief, that Mike would stay on the sofa during these sleepovers. Fine by them both, even if Jane thinks the adults' worries are stupid.

She soon finds herself sitting on the floor, directly next to Mike, simply staring at him. He's so beautifully peaceful right now as he sleeps. His hair has found its way in front of his face during the night, and the way it now frames his face as he sleeps looks absolutely beautiful, in Jane's opinion.

She studies his face, reflecting on the changes between that first week and now. There's more shape, the same old number of freckles, and

she can't help but notice the slight parting of his lips as he breathes softly in his sleep. *Mouthbreather*, she quietly laughs to herself as she watches a few strands of hair rock back and forth with his breathing.

Absent-mindedly, she reaches to tuck said strands away behind his ear, allowing herself to study his face better. She's not sure why, but she has an odd need to just sit here right now, staring at the boy who'd essentially saved her life back then. She knows that if Hopper sees her like this, he *will not* be happy, but she doesn't care. As long as she gets to spend as much time as possible with Mike, she's happy. She knows she'll never really be able to fully thank Mike for what he'd given her, but as long as they're never separated again, as long as they can spend the rest of their lives together ( *yes, she is certain she wants that – she doesn't care if she's thirteen* ) , she's as happy as could possibly be.

The feeling of her fingers crossing his head must've woken him, as he stirs, eventually opening his eyes.

First sight after waking up being Jane's face? Mike'd be happy if he could have that every single day, he thinks as he already begins to blush.

"El?" he can't help but smile at the sight of her; her eyes large as she seemingly studies him, and her hair encompassing her face in those wild curls of hers.

"Mike." she sighs back, the smile on his face immediately contagious. She lets her hand smooth his cheek, uncaring of the affect it has on him.

"What're you doing?" he asks, the feel of her palm on his cheek making him feel like he could combust any second.

"I... don't know." she admits, yet doesn't remove her hand. "I was... remembering."

"Remembering?" he asks, wondering what she could be referring to.

"The week you found me." she clarifies. "You've changed a lot."

“Oh...” he’s caught off-guard by her observation, but inadvertently comes to consider one of her changes. He moves one of his own hands into her hair.

“So have you.” he says, wrapping a curl around his finger.

She smiles, ducking her head slightly as she always does.

“What made you remember that time?” he asks her.

“I don’t know.” she says again. “I just did... so I was thinking of what we were like then. I was so scared, and confused. But you helped me, the second you met me you always wanted to help, even before I spoke. I...”

She can’t help but let a tear fall through her smirk, which Mike notices immediately.

“Oh, El.” he smiles himself, wiping away the tear from her eye.

“I... I can never thank you enough.” she tells him. “For taking me home, for feeding me, for protecting me.”

“El...” he can’t believe what he’s heard. “You thank me every day. You’re thanking me right now.”

“I know-”

“No, I mean, you thank me just by being here.” he tells her. He sits up now, patting the sofa as a way of telling her to sit next to him, which she does so. He takes both of her hands in his as their eyes lock.

“Just by being here.” he repeats. “That’s all I can ever want, El. As long as you’re safe, and we’re together, I am the happiest person on this planet.”

He doesn’t care that admitting this to her causes him to nearly boil, because the smile it puts on her face is absolutely *beautiful*. He’d walk circles around the Earth daily if it meant he could see that smile for the rest of his life.

“Mike...” she doesn’t really know what to say.

“I think that too.” she settles on.

“You being here. Us being together, that makes me happy. I never want it to change.”

Mike’s smile grows to a stupid extent. The fact *she* thinks this about *him*, of all people, will never cease to amaze him. All the people she could’ve run into that night, it just had to be him. He’ll always be forever thankful.

“Me too, El.” he wraps a hand around her, and his head lands onto her shoulder.

She returns the hug, her head also landing upon his shoulder. She could stay like this forever – the comfort of being in his arms is something she’ll never get tired of, she’s sure.

*To more nights like this* , she smiles against his shoulder.

*To holding each-other like this for the rest of our lives*, he smiles against hers.

#### **Author's Note:**

I hope you managed to work some sense out of this mess ♥